

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-
OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF
2003

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce H.R. 1683, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2003. Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member LANE EVANS, as well as the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Benefits Subcommittee, HENRY BROWN and MICHAEL MICHAUD, respectively, join me as original cosponsors of the bill. H.R. 1683 would provide a cost-of-living adjustment to veterans' benefits, effective December 1, 2003.

The VA Committee periodically reviews the service-connected disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) programs to ensure that the benefits provide reasonable and adequate compensation for disabled veterans and their families. Based on this review, Congress acts annually to provide a cost-of-living adjustment in compensation and DIC benefits.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has provided increases in these rates for every fiscal year since 1976. The Administration's fiscal year 2004 budget submission, as well as the House Budget Resolution, includes funding for an increase that is currently estimated to be 2.0 percent.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNITION OF THE COMMUNITY
OF KUNA, IDAHO

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Master Sergeant Samuel Johnston and the proud community of Kuna, Idaho. Sergeant Johnston is serving in the Iraq War as a member of the Idaho National Guard. He was deployed to Kuwait in January—leaving his 60-acre farm unattended. Last week his neighbors in Kuna finished spring planting on the Johnston farm.

Francis Murphey organized the volunteer group consisting of Dick Deutsche, Alan White, Leonard Flynn, Darrell Lee Robertson, Dave Reynolds, Jack Noble, John McPherson, Lavar K. and Layne Thornton, and Ed, Gayle and Roger Hodges.

I bring to the attention of the House these residents of Kuna, Idaho as they exemplify the American spirit of cooperation and patriotism by providing for Sergeant Johnston and his family—while he, in turn, serves and protects our country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote Nos. 109, 110, and 111 on

April 7, 2003, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of women's basketball and to pay tribute to the University of Connecticut women's basketball team.

The Huskies have won 76 of their last 77 games including a record breaking 70 wins in a row on their way to winning their second national title on April 8, 2003. They are the first women's basketball team ever to win the national championship without a senior on the team. They achieved this distinction by defeating outstanding teams from Texas and Tennessee in the Final Four.

Geno Auriemma, Chris Dailey, their assistants, Lew Perkins, and the entire UConn program are to be commended for their continued pursuit of excellence both on and off the basketball court. They are a credit to women's sports and college athletics in general.

Coach Auriemma paid a great tribute to Pat Summitt and the Tennessee team, citing that UConn beat the best women's basketball program in the country. Though his Huskies were victorious, the real winner was women's athletics.

With all the talk about changing Title IX, this Final Four bears testimony on the wisdom of that policy. Texas, Duke, Tennessee, and Connecticut brought women's basketball to another level. For purists who follow sports, its reminiscent of baseball in the 1950s and 60s. There is a purity about the women's game that is unique and endearing and transcends gender.

For the University of Connecticut team, the first ever group of all underclassmen to win the national title, what a lasting tribute to your dedication, stamina, spirit, and will to win.

They say that teams are an extension of their coach. Clearly the UConn women's program is personified in Coach Auriemma and in their leader Diana Taurasi. The Supremes had Diana Ross, the British had Princess Diana. Connecticut has "D," Diana Taurasi, simply the best women's basketball player in the country.

While Diana Taurasi at times carried this team on her back, the championship could not have been won without a team effort. Ann Strother will be remembered for shaking off a tough tournament to play her best game in the biggest game. The flawless ball handling and clutch three pointers by Maria Conlon freed Taurasi to focus on shooting and driving to the basket. The solid inside play of Jessica Moore, Barbara Turner, and Willnett Crockett kept the offense balanced and the defense off guard. And who will forget Ashley Battle's steal of the ball to seal the victory. Not to be overlooked are the contributions throughout the year of Morgan Valley, Ashley Valley, Stacey Marron, and Nicole Wolff.

I only hope Geno and Kathy, Chris Dailey, and all the coaches get to relax and enjoy the moment, because the expectation for a threepeat has already started.

Lastly, this great game with great teams was played out by young women on a national stage in what will go down as a tournament for the ages, and will inspire countless dreams of girls and boys who aspire to excel in sports and seize the moment.

I am further delighted to collect my dinner wager from Harold Ford, Jr. of Tennessee, a future President of the United States. I will enjoy every morsel of this meal as I brag on the Huskies, Diana Taurasi, the Big East, and another future President, Joe Lieberman.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to the University of Connecticut's fourth women's basketball national championship and celebrating the game of women's basketball and the continued success of women's athletics.

HONORING THE CITY OF
MILLEDGEVILLE

HON. JIM MARSHALL

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 2003

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the City of Milledgeville, Georgia, on the occasion of this historic city's year-long bicentennial celebration.

Situated just west of the Oconee River on what was then the edge of Georgia's frontier, Milledgeville was founded in 1803 after a long search by a Georgia legislature-commissioned expedition to find a new capital city. The city was named for John Milledge, who at the time was a popular Georgia governor. Within a year of its founding, the city was declared the official seat of Georgia's state government, becoming the only city outside Washington, D.C. designed specifically to be a capital city. As the capital, Milledgeville was a key location for many historic events in Georgia's history, including the 1861 signing of the Ordinance of Secession at the Old Capitol and a stopping place in 1864 for General Sherman, who slept in the Governor's Mansion as he passed through on his infamous March to the Sea. In 1868, Georgia moved its state capitol to Atlanta, but Milledgeville continued to prosper and grow, becoming home to a thriving university and new businesses while still keeping an eye on its antebellum past. Last year, the city welcomed more than 60,000 visitors to see such attractions as the Old State Capitol, the Governor's Mansion and a number of other old homes that showcase the city's true Southern style.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent this fine community of individuals who, over the years, have worked hard to build their city into what it is today. This year, the city is welcoming visitors from across the nation to join in celebrating their first 200 years of history. Part of this celebration will include the dedication of Georgia's Antebellum Capitol Museum, an old-fashioned independence day celebration, a black-tie bicentennial ball and monthly lectures highlighting the people and places that have helped make Milledgeville truly unique.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives will join me in congratulating the City of Milledgeville for its 200 years.